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## ISAIAH'S EARLIEST PROPHECY AGAINST EPHRAIM

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The problems connected with the criticism and interpretation of Isaiah's earliest prophecy against Ephraim, 9:7-20, are still in solution. These problems are three in number:

- I. Is Isa. 5:25, 26-30, the original conclusion of this prophecy?
- II. Is Isa. 10:1-4 an original continuation of the prophecy?
- III. Is the prophecy mainly a historical retrospect or is it exclusively predictive?

Gesenius and Hitzig were apparently unconscious of these problems. They failed to raise the question of the connection between 5:25, 26-30, and 9:7-20. They took for granted the originality of the connection between 10:1-4 and 9:7-20, undisturbed by Koppe's earlier doubts of this apparently obvious fact. They assumed the predictive character of 9:7-20. Ewald was the first to advance the brilliant conjecture that 5:26-30 was the concluding stanza of the poem in 9:7-10:4, and at the same time he interpreted 9:7-20 as a historical retrospect. Dillmann in his great commentary and Giesebrecht in his *Beiträge zur Jesaiakritik*, both works appearing almost simultaneously in 1890, adopted Ewald's views, though correcting them at one point which sadly needed correction. Ewald had separated 5:25 from 5:26-30 and had placed the verse before 9:7-20 as an introduction. This was recognized by Dillmann and Giesebrecht to be impossible, but the problem presented by 5:25 was solved by them in different ways. Dillmann regarded the verse as a fragment of a lost stanza; Giesebrecht took it to be an editorial patchwork elaborated out of the refrain, vs. 25b (which had come into its present position along with 5:26-30), combined with a number of conventional prophetic ideas. Giesebrecht went farther than Dillmann, however, and renewed Koppe's attack upon the originality of 10:1-4 in its present position. The great weight of Duhm's pronouncements (*Das Buch Jesaja*, 1892) has deflected the course of criticism initiated by Ewald and developed by Dillmann and

Giesebrecht. Though adopting Ewald's view that 5:26-29 (Duhm eliminated vs. 30 as a later gloss) was the conclusion of 9:7-20, he rather petulantly criticized the interpretation of 9:7-20 as a historical retrospect and returned to the predictive theory of Gesenius and Hitzig. The present position of 10:1-4 was defended and 5:25 taken with Dillmann as a fragment of a lost stanza. Succeeding scholars have accepted with practical unanimity Ewald's view of 5:26-29 (30?), but have split upon the critical problems presented by 10:1-4 and 5:25 and the hermeneutical problem presented by 9:7-20. Giesebrecht's attack upon the originality of 10:1-4 has met with little or no favor, while authorities are about evenly divided on the question of the interpretation of 9:7-20.<sup>1</sup> Under these circumstances it may not be superfluous to subject the prophecy to a renewed investigation in the hope that a recombination of the old elements of the problems now in solution, together with the injection of some few new elements hitherto overlooked, may occasion a final precipitation.

#### I. IS 5:26-29 [30] THE ORIGINAL CONCLUSION TO 9:7-20?

Though 5:26-30 is now universally recognized to be the original conclusion to 9:7-20, it will be necessary for the sake of the subsequent argument to restate and supplement the reasons that have supported this opinion.

1. The prophecy 9:7-20 or 9:7-10:4 (the problem of 10:1-4 may for the moment be disregarded) is unfinished. It ends with a refrain (9:20b or 10:4b) which is logically equivalent to a "to be continued." Ephraim has not repented; God's judgment is still incomplete. That Isaiah could have thought of the judgment as remaining incomplete, or that he could have failed to refer to the dénouement is inconceivable.

2. As 5:26-30 now stands, it is a fragment. It is unconnected with the preceding part of the chapter; 5:25 is not a connecting link, but it serves, rather, to emphasize the lack of relationship between 5:26-30 and 5:1-24. The passage 5:1-24 falls into two distinct

<sup>1</sup> In favor of a reference to the future are: Gesenius, Hitzig, Driver, Duhm, Marti, Whitehouse, Gressmann, Gray. In favor of a historical reference are: Ewald, Giesebrecht, Dillmann, Kuenen, Cheyne, König, Skinner, Wilke, Staerk.

sections, the Vineyard Parable (vss. 1-7) and a series of Woes (vss. 8-24). These latter come to their appropriate conclusion at vs. 24 and vss. 25, 26-30 have nothing to do with them either in structure or thought.

3. The fact that the refrain of the prophecy in 9:7-20 is found again at 5:25<sup>b</sup> was the clue which led to Ewald's conjecture that the isolated fragment which follows (vss. 26-30) was the original conclusion so sadly missed at 9:7-20 (10:1-4). The two passages gain enormously when they are joined together. The one receives a fitting conclusion, the other an adequate introduction.

4. The general agreement in rhythm and strophical arrangement between 5:26-30 and 9:7-10:4 corroborates strikingly this conjecture. For the sake of clearness a translation<sup>1</sup> follows in which the necessary or probable corrections to be made in the text are indicated and the strophical arrangement is revealed.

#### STROPHE I

##### A. *Introductory*

- 9:7        The Lord hath sent a word against Jacob,  
            And it shall fall upon Israel;  
9:8a, b    And the people, all of them shall recognize (it),  
            Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria;

##### B. *Sin*

- 9:8c, d    [For they spake]<sup>a</sup> in pride  
            And in stoutness of heart, saying;  
9:9        The bricks have fallen but with hewn stone will we build;  
            Sycamores have been cut down but with cedars will we replace  
            them.

##### C. *Punishment*

- 9:10       So Jahweh exalted [his]<sup>b</sup> adversaries against him,  
            And his enemies he spurreth on;  
9:11a, b    Aram on the East and Philistia on the West,  
            And they devoured Israel with full mouth.

##### D. *Refrain*

- 9:11c      For all this his anger did not turn away  
            But his hand is stretched out still.

<sup>1</sup> Based mainly on Gray. Brackets imply emendations; parentheses, *implicita*.

STROPHE II<sup>c</sup>A. *Sin*

- 9:12 Yet the people did not turn to him that smote him,  
Nor of Jahweh of Hosts did they inquire;  
9:16c, d For they were altogether blasphemous and given to evil  
And every mouth was speaking folly.<sup>d</sup>

B. *Punishment*

- 9:13 So Jahweh<sup>e</sup> cut off from Israel head and tail,  
Palm-branch and reed in a single day;  
9:16a, b [ ]<sup>f</sup> Over his young men the Lord doth not rejoice,<sup>g</sup>  
To his fatherless and widows he doth not show compassion.

C.<sup>h</sup> *Punishment (continued?)*

- 9:14 . . . . .  
9:15 . . . . .  
. . . . .

D. *Refrain*

- 9:16e For all this his anger did not turn away  
But his hand is stretched out still.

## STROPHE III

A. *Sin*

- 9:17 For crime burned as a fire,  
Thorns and briars it consumes;  
And it kindled in the thickets of the forest,  
And they (whirled about ?<sup>i</sup>) in a (column ?<sup>i</sup>) of smoke.

B.<sup>j</sup> *Sin as Punishment*

- 9:18, a, b In the anger of Jahweh [ ]<sup>k</sup> was the land made to [reel]<sup>l</sup>,  
And the people became like [devourers of men]<sup>m</sup>;  
9:19a, b And they sliced on the right and remained hungry,  
And they devoured on the left and were not sated.

C. *Sin as Punishment (continued)*

- 9:18c Not one shows pity to his brother,  
9:19c They devour, each one his neighbor's flesh;  
9:20a Manasseh (devours) Ephraim, and Ephraim, Manasseh,  
Together (they combine) against Judah.

D. *Refrain*

- 9:20b For all this his anger did not turn away  
But his hand is stretched out still.

STROPHE IV

A. *Sins of the Judiciary*

- 10:1, 2      Woe to those that decree mischievous decrees,  
                  And that, busily writing, write nought but trouble,  
                  That they may turn aside the needy from judgment,  
                  And make plunder of the right of the poor [      ]<sup>a</sup>,  
                  That widows may become their spoil  
                  And that the fatherless they may prey upon.

B. *Warning of Punishment*

- 10:3            What will ye do at the Day of Visitation  
                  And at (the Day of) Storm that cometh from afar?  
                  Unto whom will ye flee for help?  
                  And whither will ye [carry into safety]<sup>o</sup> your wealth?

C. ?

- 10:4a, b      . . . . .<sup>p</sup>  
                  Beneath the slain they fall (!)

D. *Refrain*

- 10:4c          For all this his anger did not turn away  
                  But his hand is stretched out still

STROPHE V

A. *The Swift Approach of the Assyrian*

- 5:26-27a      Then will he lift up a standard to [a nation]<sup>a</sup> afar off,  
                  And will whistle to it from the end of the earth;  
                  And behold! with speed, swiftly he comes,  
                  None weary, none stumbling among them [      ]<sup>r</sup>

B. *The Sufficiency of His Equipment*

- 5:27b, 28      The girdle of their loins has not been untied,  
                  Nor the latchet of their shoes snapped,  
                  Whose arrows are sharpened,  
                  And all their bows bent  
                  Whose horses' hoofs are like flint,  
                  And whose chariot wheels are accounted like the whirlwind.

C. *The Irresistibleness of His Attack*

- 5:29            Their roar is like that of a lioness  
                  And they roar like young lions,  
                  And they growl and seize the prey,  
                  And they carry it off and there is none to deliver.<sup>s</sup>

## TEXT-CRITICAL NOTES

<sup>a</sup> Present form of vs. 8 exegetically and rhythmically bad. **לֹא־מִר** can not depend upon **יִרְעֶה**. It depends on a verb now lost. If supplied, the rhythm is also improved. For the exact form of the verb to be supplied, see below.

<sup>b</sup> Delete Resin and emend to **צִרִיךְ**. The present text impossible; cf. Duhm.

<sup>c</sup> Strophe III badly disintegrated. For the tentative transpositions see below.

<sup>d</sup> For participle after **כִּי** referring to past time cf. Num. 25:18; Judg. 14:4.

<sup>e</sup> The line too full, but excisions uncertain.

<sup>f</sup> The connection established between vss. 15 and 16 by **עַל־כֵּן** faulty. Punishment of the helpless would not follow upon the deception of the people by their rulers. Contrast Isaiah's view, 3:12 ff. Either vs. 16 was originally found elsewhere or **עַל־כֵּן** is editorial. See below.

<sup>g</sup> **יִשְׁמַח** a poor word, but conjectures as to original reading doubtful.

<sup>h</sup> Vss. 14 and 15 have taken the place of four original lines now lost: Duhm, Marti, Gray.

<sup>i</sup> Words very doubtful.

<sup>j</sup> For transpositions in B and C, cf. Duhm, Marti, Gray.

<sup>k</sup> Omit **צָבָאוֹת** with LXX, *causa met.*

<sup>l</sup> Cf. Marti for emendation.

<sup>m</sup> Cf. Duhm.

<sup>n</sup> **עָמַר** possibly to be deleted, *causa met.*

<sup>o</sup> Read **תִּקְוָה** with Ehrlich. See below.

<sup>p</sup> Untranslatable. For Lagarde's conjecture, see below.

<sup>q</sup> Read singular.

<sup>r</sup> Second clause in vs. 27 disturbs parallelism and is a quotation from Ps. 121:4.

<sup>s</sup> Vs. 30 in no intelligible connection with what precedes. Probably a gloss intended to bring the Assyrian into difficulties (Duhm, Marti).

It will be seen that the prophecy in 9:7—10:4 breaks up into four clearly marked strophes of fourteen lines each, i.e., twelve lines and the refrain, while the dominant rhythm is 3:3, though longer lines occur. Similarly, the fragment 5:26—29 after the elimination of the offending phrase, "None shall slumber nor sleep," and the impossible vs. 30, is found to be again just fourteen lines in dominantly 3:3 rhythm, this time, however, without the refrain. But the omission

of the refrain is just what we should expect in the closing strophe. Its presence would be both rhetorically and exegetically most unfortunate. Thus the coincidence between 9:7—10:4 and 5:26—29 in their general structure is most striking.

But this coincidence in structure is not confined to the general arrangement of the poem. If we omit for the moment 10:1—4 from consideration, it is seen also in details. The three strophes of 9:7—20 and the one of 5:26—29 are each subdivided into three smaller groups or stanzas, a fact that seems to have escaped attention. The first and third strophes are arranged on a scheme of three quatrains to each strophe. In the first strophe we have (a) the introduction (vss. 7, 8a, b), (b) the sin of Ephraim considered as pride (vss. 8c, d, 9), and (c) the punishment (vss. 10, 11a, b). Similarly in the third strophe we have (a) the sin of Ephraim (vs. 17) and the punishment, this time elaborated in two quatrains, (b) vss. 18a, b, 19a, b, in which the nation is depicted as reeling to destruction in a certain cannibalistic fury which in (c), vss. 18c, 19c, and 20, is finally turned against itself. Here the sin of the nation becomes merged into its punishment in a most impressive way. Contrasted with the clear arrangement in the first and third strophes, the middle strophe has no symmetrical arrangement. But this is due, not to intentional variation, but to textual decomposition. As it stands we have (a) a distich (vs. 12) referring to sin, (b) a distich (vs. 13) referring to punishment, enlarged to a quatrain by vs. 14, which is universally regarded as a gloss, (c) a distich (vs. 15) whose meaning, whether sin or punishment, is doubtful and whose originality at this point is equally doubtful, (d) a distich (vs. 16a, b) referring to punishment followed(!) by (e) a final distich (vs. 16c), again referring to sin. This illogical mosaic certainly cannot be original. Relief is found if vs. 15, which lays the blame on the rulers rather than on the nation, is also eliminated along with vs. 14 as a reminiscence of 3:12, utilized to fill out a defective passage in the manuscript.<sup>1</sup> But difficulties still remain.

If עַל-כֵּן be retained, vs. 16a, b can as little follow on vs. 13 as on vs. 15. עַל-כֵּן logically follows on a reference to sin, not on a reference to punishment. It is perhaps best to hold that עַל-כֵּן has come in

<sup>1</sup> Duhm, Cheyne, Marti, Gray



with vss. 14, 15 (Marti), the unfortunate connection being due to an editor. If **על-כך** is rejected, vs. 16*a*, *b* can be attached to vs. 13. Again we would expect vs. 16*c*, *d* to precede both vs. 13 and vs. 16*a*, *b*. But the exact sequence of the verses can scarcely be restored with any assurance. All that can be affirmed is that in the second strophe we have preserved, though in a disintegrated form, a quatrain describing the sin (vss. 12, 16*c*, *d*) and a quatrain describing the punishment (vss. 13, 16*a*, *b*). The third quatrain, probably elaborating the punishment, is lost. Enough has been said to indicate that the middle strophe, like the others, was originally composed of three quatrains. In the final stanza (5:26–29) the thought of the punishment alone is dwelt upon and there is a slight difference in the grouping of the lines. The triple division of the strophe is retained, but instead of three quatrains we have (*a*) a quatrain describing the speedy approach of the last enemy (vss. 26, 27*a*), (*b*) a hexastich on his adequate equipment for purposes of destruction (vss. 27*b*–28), and (*c*) a quatrain on the irresistibility of the attack (vs. 29). But since the arrangement must be varied to some extent to make good the loss of the refrain, this slight variation in the grouping of the lines within the stanza need occasion no suspicion. The fact that 5:26–29 thus shares the threefold division of the other strophes confirms the fact of its original connection with them.

5. Finally 5:26–29 is seen to be the appropriate conclusion of 9:7–20 when the sequence of thought is examined. On the above arrangement of the strophes there is revealed a progress in the thought of Ephraim's sin and punishment of great poetic power and impressiveness. In 9:7–20 the sin of Ephraim is characterized in the first strophe as *pride*, Isaiah here taking up the accusations of Amos and Hosea; in the second as blasphemous rejection of Jahweh and in the third as a complete breakdown of law and order. Crime<sup>1</sup> is rampant. Again in 9:7–20 there is progress in the conception of the punishment. In the first strophe it consists in invasion by Israel's ancient enemies,

<sup>1</sup> **רשעה** is found only here in Isaiah. The adjective occurs at 3:11; 5:23 and 11:4. Of these three passages only 5:23 is above suspicion, and here the root refers to one guilty at law, a criminal; cf. Exod. 2:13; 23:1, 7 and Deut. 25:1, and cf. also the use of the verb (not in Isaiah) at Exod. 22:8; Deut. 25:1 and I Kings 8:32 (contrast 8:47). It would thus seem that the earlier uses of the term favor the restricted idea of crime. Later the root was enlarged to cover wickedness generally and became a favorite term in the Psalms and Proverbs. **רשע** does not occur in I Isaiah.

Damascus and Philistia. In the second there is a decimation of the people, though whether by plague or battle is not clear (the obscurity is probably due to the defectiveness of the strophe). In the third there is total disintegration of the national life. Internal anarchy reigns.

The last strophe, 5:26-29, is the proper conclusion to both these sequences of thought. The thought of sin is now dropped and properly so. When the final judgment of the future is introduced it would only weaken the announcement to reiterate the reason for it. The effect of the refrain would be lost. Past sins have been punished *but not sufficiently*. His hand is stretched out still. What is wanted in the culmination is not further reason for punishment but a punishment that is decisive. If the thought of further sin were introduced before the dénouement, it would tend to suggest the idea that past sins were not sufficiently heinous to account for a destruction so universal and terrible as the last punishment was to involve. But the refrain implies just the opposite thought. The *past* sins are so great that it requires a visitation more terrible than any yet experienced adequately to avenge them. Thus the logical sequence, demanded by the refrain, to the description of the insufficiently punished sins of the people is a description, not of further sin, but of a punishment that is at last sufficient. Again in the particular development of the thought of punishment found in 5:26-29 the poem reaches a rounded conclusion. The punishment is again effected by foreign invasion. Thus the last strophe of the poem returns to the thought of the first strophe but with a remarkably increased intensity in the delineation. While the opening strophe dealt only with Israel's ancient enemies, the last strophe introduces the irresistible Assyrian against whom the nation, already brought to the verge of ruin, will be helpless. By this means the poem rounds to its conclusion in a thoroughly artistic and impressive manner.

Thus from every point of view the hypothesis of Ewald is corroborated: 5:26-29 must be regarded as the conclusion to 9:7-20. At only one point is there a break between the two sections. In 9:7-20 the dominating tenses are historical in form; in 5:26-29 they are future. The significance of this change will be discussed later.

## II. IS 10:1-4 THE ORIGINAL CONTINUATION OF 9:7-20?

If the conclusion just arrived at is admitted then the only place for 10:1-4 is between 9:7-20 and 5:26-29.<sup>1</sup> It becomes necessary, therefore, to consider the relationship of 10:1-4, not only to 9:7-20, but also to 5:26-29.

A. *On the relationship of 10:1-4 to 9:7-20.*—10:1-4 differs from what precedes in structure, content, mode of expression, and grammatical construction to such a remarkable degree that an original connection with what precedes must be denied.

1. It must be admitted at the outset that the same general strophical arrangement (twelve lines and the refrain) is found in 10:1-4 as in the rest of the poem, and it may seem at first sight a most unwarranted proceeding to deny the originality of a strophe apparently built upon the same scheme as all the others. But on nearer inspection the different arrangement of lines within the strophe is striking. There is a kind of threefold division here also, it is true, but it is totally unlike the divisions in the other stanzas. We find (a) a hexastich (vss. 1, 2) on the injustice of the judges, followed by (b) a quatrain (vs. 3), an apostrophe to them in their distress, and finally (c) a distich (vs. 4a, b) which, in the present text, is quite unintelligible, but can hardly go with vs. 3 since there is a sudden change from the direct address (vs. 3) to the third person (vs. 4a). The variation here is different from the variation in the second strophe. There it was clearly due to textual decomposition. This is not the case in 10:1-4. Only at vs. 4a has the text suffered, and whatever the original was it could scarcely affect the present grouping of the lines. However, if this variation in the strophical arrangement of 10:1-4 were the only difficulty it would be trivial. It becomes significant only when combined with the difficulties next to be mentioned.

2. The passage 9:7-20 concerns the whole nation; 10:1-4 refers only to a particular class. This is unexpected in itself and distinctly interrupts the natural progress of the thought. After the universal condemnation in what precedes this attack upon a special class is a weak anticlimax.

3. But further, and this difficulty has escaped the attention of commentators, a reference to the sins of a particular class is all the

<sup>1</sup> The problem presented by 5:25 will be deferred as the decision with regard to it will have no effect upon the following argument.

more unexpected in a strophe which deals with the dénouement in the great drama of national ruin. That the strophe concerns the final stage in God's judgment is clear from the reference to "the Day of Visitation." But it is singular that the final judgment which is national in its scope should be introduced by the sins of a particular class after the nation as a whole has been described as ripe for judgment. Why this specialization at all, but above all why this specialization in this particular strophe?<sup>1</sup>

4. The temper of 10:2a also unexpectedly differs from the temper of 9:16. In 9:16 there is a most unusual expression of pitilessness toward those of whom Isaiah is generally mindful (cf. 1:17; 23; 3:12). At 10:2b his usual championship of the cause of the oppressed against the exactions of the governing classes is expressed. This change in tone has been noted by others<sup>2</sup> but what has not been observed is that this softer mood is entirely out of place in a strophe which introduces the final doom. We should expect an increasingly uncompromising attitude as we approach the culminating judgment rather than a more discriminating attitude.

5. The striking plan in the preceding strophes is abandoned in 10:1-4. Instead of a historically expressed description of the sin followed by a description of the punishment, the sinning class is directly addressed and the judgment that is to follow is not so much described (unless at vs. 4a) as assumed. That the *Day of Visitation* is not announced but assumed in the very stanza which introduces it is certainly unnatural when the progress of the poem and the suggestion of the refrain are considered. We watch to see Jahweh's outstretched hand descend upon the guilty, but instead the guilty are asked what they will do when it does descend. The onward sweep of the poem is diverted by this change in a rhetorically most unfortunate way. In the three preceding arguments it will be noted that the variations in 10:1-4 from 9:7-20 are not only unexpected but quite unaccountable in a strophe that purports to deal with the final stage in the development of the theme.

6. Again, the change to the direct address at vs. 3 is difficult from another point of view. It would seem to imply that Isaiah

<sup>1</sup> Hitzig's observation that "with the last stanza the oracle turns especially to those who are chiefly responsible for bringing down the judgment of Jehovah" only shows how absurd this is after 9:7-20.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Gray.

was addressing an actual audience. But is this natural if the audience is Northern Israel? Was Isaiah ever in Israel or did he send this prophecy to Israel in a letter?<sup>1</sup>

The difficulties in 10:1-4 above enumerated are so great that the attempt has been made to relieve them by referring the passage to Judah instead of to Israel.<sup>2</sup> By this means it is claimed, the anti-climax noted above can be avoided and the change to the sins of the particular class here mentioned, to the direct address and to the milder tone at vs. 2 can be accounted for. But granting for the sake of argument that the passage does refer to Judah,<sup>3</sup> its position becomes even more untenable as Giesebrecht long ago pointed out.

a) There is no adequate explanation for this sudden introduction of an attack upon the authorities in Judah in a prophecy addressed to Israel.<sup>4</sup> Certainly 9:20 cannot be regarded as supplying the connecting link.<sup>5</sup> The reference in 9:20 to the aggression upon Judah is no adequate transition to a woe against Judah. In 9:20 Judah is sinned against, not sinning. (b) Further, 10:1-4 interpreted of Judah would disturb the balance of the poem.<sup>6</sup> Three strophes would be devoted to the elaboration of Israel's sins and to the inadequacy of Israel's punishment. But only one strophe would be given to Judah's sins and the inadequacy of its punishment would be ignored altogether. Yet both Judah and Israel would be involved in the same final condemnation (5:26-29). Thus from every point of view the position of 10:1-4 after 9:7-20 is seen to be impossible. Is its position before 5:26-29 any more comfortable?

<sup>1</sup> Duhm feels this difficulty but his pronouncement that Israel stood near enough to the Jewish prophet to account for the address to its rulers hardly allays the difficulty. It is true that in 17:10 ff. Samaria, the capital of Ephraim, is probably directly addressed (note the second fem. suff., but contrast 28:1 ff.). But an apostrophe of the capital is after all different from this apostrophe of the rulers.

<sup>2</sup> Ewald, Dillmann, Cheyne.

<sup>3</sup> This view is altogether probable so far as vss. 1, 2 are concerned. These verses agree most closely with the Woes in chap. 5 as has often been remarked. If עֲמִיר were retained it would support the reference to Judah. But it is rhythmically doubtful.

<sup>4</sup> When Dillmann argues that Jacob and Israel (9:7) have Judah as well as Israel in view from the beginning he is arguing from his interpretation of 10:1-4 back to the interpretation of 9:7. This is most precarious, especially in view of the nearer definition of Jacob and Israel in vs. 8. Cheyne's emphasis upon כָּלִי הָעֵם in defense of the same view of vs. 7 is quite inadequate. It is curious to notice how even in Duhm's last and presumably final revision of his great commentary there is still a certain ambiguity at this point. 10:1-4 is explained of Israel and Jacob, Israel is *in erster Linie Ephraim*. Yet just before he speaks of Judah as not being spared though the blows descend *first* upon Israel!

<sup>5</sup> Ewald, Dillmann.

<sup>6</sup> Gies.

*B. On the relationship of 10:1-4 to 5:26-29.*—In construction and content 10:1-4 must be taken with 5:26-29 rather than with 9:7-20. In both passages there is a striking change in grammatical construction from the historical tenses of 9:7-20 to the unequivocal future forms in 10:1-4 and 5:26-29. In both passages the subject is the final stage in the development, the *dénouement*. But at once difficulties emerge.

1. The passage 10:1-4 commits the very blunder which we have seen was so happily avoided in 5:26-29. A reference to further sin is introduced into a strophe which deals with the *dénouement*. Logically this implies that Jahweh's arm should have been withdrawn and the final catastrophe avoided had there not been a prospect of still more sin in the future. But the logic of the refrain demands that when the final catastrophe is reached the thought of the sin should be excluded. What rhetoric now demands is a development of the terrible implications of the refrain, not a further justification of it.

2. Again the presence of the refrain in a stanza which refers to the climax of the whole development is rhetorically exceedingly bad. I cannot persuade myself that Isaiah would have been guilty of such a mistake. The real difficulty is not merely that the refrain is found in a strophe that refers to the future but that it is found in a strophe that refers to the *last stage* of the future. If Jahweh's arm is stretched out still in the Day of Visitation what, one may reasonably ask, can come next?

It is true that if once 5:26-29 is attached to 10:1-4 the logical position of the refrain becomes somewhat improved for it can be maintained that the *dénouement* itself is divided into two acts; 10:1-4 would be the first act in which God's hand is still uplifted and 5:26-29 would describe the second act. But while the refrain thus gains in logic, the close of the poem loses proportionately in rhetorical power. Instead of coming with the swiftness and inevitableness which the repetition of the refrain throughout the poem leads us to expect, the *dénouement* is long-drawn-out. It begins in 10:1-4, but is again deferred. This partial anticipation of the climax in 10:1-4, when the imagination has been stirred to expect the climax itself, produces a most unfortunate effect. If one will

read 5:26-29 immediately after 9:7-20 he will at once feel how the poem gains in the concentrated power and impressiveness of its onward sweep. For 5:26-29 is not the continuation of 10:1-4; it is its rival. And those who accept 5:26-29 as the original conclusion of the prophecy should not hesitate to take the next step and remove 10:1-4 from its present position. Giesebrecht, almost alone among scholars, has pointed out this necessary inference. It is surprising to find critics like Duhm, Cheyne, Marti, and Gray, who feel quite free to make excisions or transpositions elsewhere, hesitating at 10:1-4. Duhm gives symptoms of being not quite at his ease with this passage. Marti feels still more uncomfortable and expresses the feeling that vss. 1-3 may not have originally belonged here.<sup>1</sup> Gray almost manages to bring himself to the point of rejecting the entire passage, but not quite. The claim is confidently made that the arguments already advanced should not only almost, but altogether persuade of the necessity to excise the entire passage, at least in its present form and meaning.<sup>2</sup> I have tried to explain to myself the unusual hesitation of scholars to take such an obvious step. With the exception of Gray they give no reasons for their timidity. But there are two factors which probably account for it and which must be reckoned with.

1. Gray points out "that it would be curious for an intrusive section to be of the exact length of the other strophes." The force of this argument has already been admitted. It can only be met by showing that the evidence against the genuineness of the passage in its present form is simply overwhelming. This evidence falls into three groups, the first two of which have been already sufficiently discussed: (a) The variation in the internal strophical arrangement in 10:1-4. This is the least important line of evidence. (b) The rhetorical defectiveness of the strophe in its present position. Under this head is embraced all that has been said in arguments A, 2-6 and B, 1, 2. What I desire to emphasize at this point is that most of the difficulties adverted to involve rhetorical blunders, arising not only from the contextual relationship of 10:1-4 but from within 10:1-4 itself, which Isaiah could hardly have committed. In its

<sup>1</sup> Hackmann, *Zukunftserwartung des Jesaja*, p. 55, is more positive.

<sup>2</sup> Whether a strophe of entirely different meaning once stood here is another question (see below).

present form 10:1-4 is an instance of exceptionally bad editorial patchwork. (c) Lastly, while there can be no reasonable doubt that vss. 1, 2 are Isaianic, it seems to have escaped the notice of commentators that the associations of the phrases and ideas in vss. 3, 4 are with the later Hebrew literature. This line of evidence to which we must now address ourselves will confirm the conclusion already arrived at from the first two lines of evidence.

a) **יום פקדה** (Day of Visitation) as an eschatological term is probably late, and is especially characteristic of Jeremiah. In the form "year of visitation" or "time of visitation" it is found eight times in Jeremiah.<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere it occurs in an eschatological sense only in Mic. 7:4 and Hos. 7:9 ("Days of Visitation").<sup>2</sup> In Hosea the phrase does not seem to refer to a vaguely distant day but to an immediate historical judgment.

b) **שואה** ("desolation," or, better, "storm") occurs only in late passages and in an eschatological connection only in Zeph. 1:15;<sup>3</sup> Ezek. 38:9, and probably in Prov. 1:27.<sup>4</sup>

c) Ehrlich has called attention to the difficulty of the verb **תעזבו** ("will ye leave") after **ואנה** (wrongly translated "where" in R.V.). This adverb means "whither" not "where," and what is desiderated is a verb of movement. Ehrlich has suggested **תעזרו**. If this attractive emendation is adopted it is interesting to observe that out of the three instances of the occurrence<sup>5</sup> of this verb elsewhere two are found in Jeremiah and in both cases the word is used in connection with the mysterious danger from the North, i.e., in an eschatological passage.

d) Finally there are the much-disputed phrases in vs. 4a. The second line of the distich is translatable, but like the famous sentence in *Alice in Wonderland*, while it is good Hebrew it seems to have no

<sup>1</sup> 8:12; 10:15; 11:23 (against the Men of Anathoth); 23:12; 46:21; 48:44 (against Moab); 50:27 (against the Chaldeans); 51:18. The word "visitation" occurs also in Job 10:12, but in a good sense.

<sup>2</sup> The text is here uncertain, but the phrase is probably to be preserved; cf. J. M. P. Smith *vs. Marti ad loc.* The passage as a whole, however, belongs to the disputed portion of Micah.

<sup>3</sup> "A day of storm." The word "day" is probably to be supplied in thought in Isa. 10:3 also (cf. Duhm).

<sup>4</sup> It is interesting to note that Prov. 1:27 has literary connections with the suspicious verse, Isa. 8:22, which is not far removed from the passage under discussion.

<sup>5</sup> Isa. 10:31; Jer. 4:6; 6:1; cf. Exod. 9:19 (R).



meaning. The picture which it would convey is badly blurred. A similar phrase, but one that expresses a picture that can be much more easily visualized, is found in Jer. 6:15 and 8:12, and in both cases it is connected with a reference to "the time of visitation."<sup>1</sup> The first line of the distich as it stands cannot be translated. But if Lagarde's famous conjecture<sup>2</sup> is adopted it is again noteworthy that the two verbs כרעת ("bowed down") and דת ("broken") used here of the humiliation of the Egyptian gods are used in Isa. 46:1 and Jer. 50:2 of the humiliation of Bel-Marduk. Certainly if 10:3 f. is original with Isaiah it was a veritable gold pocket for later writers to mine out of. But the more probable supposition is that an editor, steeped in the later literature, has patched up a stanza out of the Isaianic fragment vss. 1, 2, which did not originally belong here, combined with reminiscences out of later writers, in order to fill out a defective passage in his manuscript. This theory would gain in force if it were admitted that the editor already found the refrain vs. 4b following on 9:20. In this case it must be further admitted that another strophe once stood here.<sup>3</sup>

2. The second reason why scholars have not more quickly apprehended the unnaturalness of the position of 10:1-4 is probably to be found in their interpretation of 9:7-20 as prediction. If 9:7-20 as well as 10:1-4 refers to the future, the break between the two passages is not quite so obvious, and the difficulty of the refrain at 10:4b is glossed over. If it can stand in 9:7-20, construed as prediction, why, it may be asked, can it not stand in 10:1-4 also? Here attention must be called to the precise difficulty at 10:4b. The difficulty is not in the fact that the refrain occurs in a passage that refers to future doom; it is in the fact that it occurs in a passage that refers to the *final stage* in the development of the future doom as is clear from the mention of the Day of Visitation. In a description of the final stage of the doom the refrain is certainly out of place. But if 9:7-20 refers to a real past and not simply to an ideal past

<sup>1</sup> The noun "visitation" should be read in 6:15; cf. 8:12 and the versions.

<sup>2</sup> "Beltis is bowed down, Osiris is broken."

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Hackmann, p. 55, n. 1. He holds that the whole of vs. 4 originally stood here. But this is doubtful. It may be objected that it is hardly fair to base critical conclusions upon phrases that are the result of emendation. On the other hand, it is interesting to remember that the two emendations which have been utilized in the argument were made without thought of any critical inferences to be deduced from them. The argument from them cannot therefore be regarded as an argument in a circle. Its strength is proportioned to the probability of the emendations.

the strength of the argument, not only against the refrain at 10:4b, but against the entire strophe in which it stands, becomes greatly strengthened. Conversely the elimination of 10:1-4 by means of which 5:26-29 comes to stand immediately after 9:7-20 greatly strengthens the argument for the historical interpretation of 9:7-20. We have thus arrived at the point where the problems of criticism and the problem of interpretation merge into each other.

### III. IS THE PROPHECY IN 9:7-20 A PREDICTION OR A HISTORICAL RETROSPECT?

1. The description both of the national sin and the national punishment in 9:7-20 is given in tenses that naturally indicate a retrospect, not a forecast. The sequence of tenses in 9:7-20 is most significant, though it has received scant attention from the commentators. For purposes of comparison the sequences are here presented, beginning with Strophe IC.

#### I C

וְיִשְׁעֵב . . . יִסְכֶּסֶךְ . . . וַיֹּאכְלוּ

#### II A

וְשָׁב . . . דָּרָשׁוּ . . . מִרַע . . . דָּבָר

#### II B

וַיִּכְרֹת . . . יִשְׁמֹת . . . יָרִיחַ

#### II C

. . . . .

#### III A

בְּעֶרְהָ . . . תֹּאכַל . . . וְתִצֵּת . . . וַיִּתְּאֲבָכוּ

#### III B

נִעְתָּם . . . וַיִּהְיֶה . . . וַיִּגְזֹר . . . וַרְעֵב . . . וַיֹּאכְלוּ . . . שָׁבְעוּ

#### III C

יִהְיֶה . . . יֹאכְלוּ . . . יֹאכְלוּ

<sup>1</sup> The transpositions here assumed do not affect the *principle* of the tense sequence as found in the present text anywhere except at vs. 16 *c.d.* Here the participles would more naturally refer to the past if attached to vs. 13 than they do if attached to vs. 15. Everywhere else the principle of the sequence, namely the control exerted by the tenses historical in form, is the same in the present text as in the reconstructed text and is even clearer in vss. 18, 19, in the present text.

If we recur to our analysis of the strophes it will be seen that the alternating descriptions of sin and judgment are regularly introduced by tenses historical in form, either perfects or waw-consecutives with the imperfect, never by imperfects alone or the perfect with waw, except in Strophe III C (vss. 18c, 19c) as reconstructed. But this quatrain is the direct continuation of the preceding quatrain and its tenses are naturally governed by the preceding tenses.<sup>1</sup> The imperfects would therefore naturally take their tense value from the controlling verbs of the various paragraphs and should be explained so as to agree with these verbs. וַיִּשְׁכַּח in vs. 10 and וַיִּשְׁכַּח in vs. 17 are most naturally taken as historical presents introduced so frequently into poetry for the sake of vividness (cf. the classic examples in Exod., chap. 15) and the imperfects in vss. 18b, 19b, and 16 might be interpreted in the same way<sup>2</sup> though I prefer to hold that in these verses the frequentative force of the imperfect makes itself felt to the extent that the tense is here used to characterize the situation, certainly in vss. 18b, 19b and probably in vs. 16.<sup>3</sup> The one case of the perfect with waw (וַיִּשְׁכַּח, vs. 19) again follows on a historical tense and is best interpreted as expressing the continuing state ("he remains hungry").<sup>4</sup> In view of the fact that the

<sup>1</sup> Just what preceded vs. 16 cannot be certainly stated, for there is a gap in the strophe at this point, but there is no sufficient reason to depart from the construction followed consistently through the rest of the poem and to suppose that a verb future in form preceded.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Driver, *Hebrew Tenses* ¶ 36. Since Driver interprets the waw-consecutives in 9:7-20 as only ideally past, of course the imperfects according to him refer to an actual future but they do not represent in themselves the action as future but are poetically describing an action in the ideal past. The principles which Driver lays down for the explanation of these imperfects will apply as well to an actual past as to an ideal past.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. especially Judg. 2:18, Isa. 42:14; Jer. 18:15a. In these cases the imperfect follows on perfects which refer to an actual past; cf. also Isa. 2:8 where the imperfect follows on the imperfect with waw exactly as in chap. 9, though the governing tense in 2:8 is admittedly not exhausted by its reference to the past. Gray objects that to regard the tenses in vs. 16 as characterizing God's action (so substantially Dillmann) is a "counsel of despair" and appeals to the suffixes and to על-כן in support of this contention. Why the suffixes should be opposed to this interpretation of the tenses in vs. 16 I fail to see. We have already seen that the על-כן is clouded with doubt. That pitilessness should characterize, not God, but the attitude of God under certain historical conditions, and that this characterization should be expressed by the imperfect, is no more difficult than to hold that pity should characterize his attitude under other conditions and that this too should be indicated by the imperfect; cf. Judg. 2:18. This passage admittedly refers to the separate exhibitions of God's mercy in past time somewhat more distinctly than does Isa. 9:16. But the use of the tense in the latter case is only a slight extension of its use in the former case and is to be explained by the fact that we are dealing with a poetically described past in which the thought of various individual incidents is merged more into a conception of the general situation.

<sup>4</sup> Contrast the one case of the perfect with waw in 9:1-6 (vs. 4b) where the reference to the future is clear.

historical forms are regularly used to introduce the various paragraphs, while the imperfects always follow, never precede, the historical tenses, it is quite illegitimate to change the pointing of **וַיִּשְׁבֹּב** in vs. 10 and of **וַיִּכְרֹת** in vs. 13, as Duhm and Marti propose to do.<sup>1</sup>

2. The fact that 9:7-20 is dealing with an actual past, which is strongly suggested by the grammatical construction of the passage, is further corroborated by the refrain. The refrain unavoidably suggests that the unrepented sins and the inadequate punishments belong, not to an ideal, but to an actual past. Israel has actually sinned. Israel has actually been punished. But Israel has not turned to him that smote him. Hence further and decisive punishment is to be expected. The rejection of this natural interpretation of the passage must be based on reasons of the most convincing kind or be regarded as absolutely unwarranted. On the predictive theory Isaiah is supposed to sketch the future development of sin and punishment, and the refrain is thought to distinguish the various stages in the nearer and more distant future. But what, then, of 5:26-29?

3. The interpretation of 9:7-20 as a historical retrospect suggested by the grammatical construction and supported by the refrain is finally confirmed by 5:26-29. *Here, where a reference to the future is universally admitted, there is a distinct change of construction to verb-forms unequivocally suggesting the future.* No commentator who construes 9:7-20 as predictive has taken the trouble to account for this sudden change in construction. As a matter of fact it can be adequately explained only by the supposition that the author now turns from a real past in which the impossibility of national repentance has been proved, to a real future in which the final doom is to be accomplished. As soon as 5:26-29 is accepted as the conclusion of 9:7-20 the argument for the interpretation of 9:7-20 as historical is immensely strengthened, and it is not due to a mere

<sup>1</sup> These changes admittedly do not require any changes in the consonantal text, and it so happens that with the exception of **וַיִּכְרֹת**, vs. 13, and **וַיִּשְׁבֹּב**, vs. 10, the imperfects can be read as futures with the waw-conjunctive in the consonantal text (cf. Gray for this observation). It is true also that the LXX favors taking the verbs as future, though it is significant that the aorist is read at vs. 13. But if we take the grammatical scheme of the passage as a whole into consideration as this is related more especially to the refrain, the pointing of the imperfects as historical, whether they refer to an ideal or to a real past, must certainly be regarded as expressing the original intent of the passage, and the attempt to change the pointing in individual instances violates the grammatical construction which seems to be very consistently carried through.

coincidence but to a sound exegetical instinct that Ewald who first recognized the true connection of 5:26-29 also interpreted 9:7-20 as a retrospect.

But how does it happen that the bearing of the accepted critical view of 5:26-29 upon the interpretation of 9:7-20 has been so largely ignored? The answer is plain. Because 10:1-4 in which the refrain occurs in a passage that admittedly refers to the future is allowed to intervene between 9:7-20 and 5:26-29 and obscure the true sequence in the grammatical construction and thought of the poem. I have sought to show on grounds quite independent of the interpretation of the tenses in 9:7-20 that the refrain in 10:1-4 is indefensible. This conclusion is now seen to be confirmed from an entirely new point of view. The passage 10:1-4, inherently faulty at every point, is more than any other one cause responsible for the incorrect interpretation of 9:7-20 as prediction. When once 5:26-29 is placed next to 9:7-20 no such misinterpretation is suggested. The natural interpretation of 9:7-20 is now confirmed, not obscured. With this last consideration the case against the originality of 10:1-4 may be regarded as completed.

But why is it that so many competent scholars still maintain the predictive interpretation of 9:7-20 in spite of the formidable difficulties, exegetical, grammatical, and critical in the way? Before we can feel finally secure in the interpretation here advocated the arguments against it must be faced.

The argument drawn from the occurrence of the refrain in 10:1-4 where the reference is to the future, that 9:7-20 is also to be interpreted of the future, has just been thrown out of court. The argument drawn from the fact that in 9:1-6 we have tenses historical in form, including imperfects with waw-consecutive (vs. 5, but only in this verse, and very properly in this verse) is equally ineffective. The point is not whether the tense forms in 9:7-20 *could* be interpreted of the future. That is admitted. The point is whether they *are* to be interpreted of the future. In the case of 9:1-6 no one would have ever dreamed of taking the passage as predictive if it had not been that this was the only way out of an otherwise insoluble problem. Duhm's severe criticism of Dillmann for rejecting the predictive interpretation of 9:7-20 while accepting it at 9:1-6 is therefore

manifestly unfair.<sup>1</sup> It will become pertinent only when Duhm can show that the historical interpretation of 9:7-20 is as impossible as the historical interpretation of 9:1-6. Here we arrive at the two reasons which, alone, have been considered sufficient to require the interpretation of 9:7-20 as prediction. The first of these reasons is exegetical, the second historical.

A. It is urged that after the introduction (vss. 7 f.) which clearly points to the future we naturally expect a reference to future punishment, not to past punishment. On the retrospective interpretation the reference to the future punishment would be deferred to the end of the poem and what immediately follows would be, it is claimed, a mere ballad, a *Schulaufsatz* (Duhm) quite unworthy of Isaiah. I cannot feel that this purely aesthetic judgment is either determinative or correct. Does not this succession of calamities actually past, which had not moved the people to repentance, prepare in the most impressive way for the introduction of the final and *conclusive* catastrophe? The difficulty does not lie in the fact that the announcement of the final doom is preceded by a historical retrospect but in the peculiar way in which the retrospect, in itself perfectly natural, is introduced. The historical tense וַיִּשְׁכַּח, vs. 10, does present a problem. The connection between it and what precedes is obscure. Vss. 8b and 9 state the first reason for Israel's doom, namely Israel's pride. Following, in the present text, immediately upon vss. 7 and 8a, the allusion in vss. 8b and 9 would naturally be to the present pride of Israel. But past punishment (vs. 10) does not follow easily upon present sin. The transition is here undoubtedly harsh, if vs. 10 introduces a historical retrospect. On the other hand, the difficulty of the waw-consecutive is almost as great if vs. 10 introduces a reference to the future. Gray retains the form and, following Driver,<sup>2</sup> regards the waw-consecutive as introducing the consequences that flow out of the fact mentioned in vs. 9. But surely the waw with the perfect would have been much more suitable to express this idea. If vss. 10 ff. really do refer to the future, the waw-consecutive with the imperfect introduces a very unnecessary ambiguity. König<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Not even 9:1-6 is quite analogous to 9:7-20 construed as prediction. The principle of the tenses would be the same, but the extent of its application assumed in 9:7-20 is without any analogy elsewhere.

<sup>2</sup> *Tenses*, ¶ 82.

<sup>3</sup> *Syntax*, 369 g.

has advanced the exegetically improbable view that **וַיִּשְׁכַּב** follows on **נפלו** as the explication of the fallen bricks! On this theory the description of the punishment, vss. 10 ff., would be in the nature of a parenthesis and the thought-sequence of the poem with its effective alternating descriptions of sin and punishment would be seriously injured. Duhm and Marti, as we have seen, correct to the weak waw, but against the grammatical scheme of the poem. Nobody seems to have raised the very obvious question what the form of the verb was which everybody admits once stood before vs. 8b. If it was a perfect then **וַיִּשְׁכַּב**, vs. 10, is the natural form to use, provided the desire is to give a historical retrospect in what follows. The conjectured perfect would probably have the force of the Greek perfect in which past and present are both included. In this case the stress of the thought would rather be upon the past to which vss. 10 ff., construed as a true past, would easily attach.

B. The second reason for denying the historical interpretation, and the one upon which Duhm and Marti lay most stress, is historical. It is claimed that the allusions in 9:7-20 are either in positive disagreement with the known historical events of the period or at least unexpectedly vague. We should expect more concrete and vivid allusions if they were to actual historical facts. In considering this objection it will be observed that two quite distinct elements enter into it, the discrepancy with the known facts and the vagueness of the allusions. These elements must be kept separate in the discussion. But before either of them can be intelligently examined the approximate date of the prophecy must be determined.

Three data are available from which to reckon the date of the prophecy. (a) the reference to the enmity of Aram and Philistia, vs. 11; (b) the reference to the civil war in Israel and to the war of Israel against Judah (vss. 18-20); (c) the reference to the advance of the Assyrian in 5:26-29. Of these the first is the surest and by itself is sufficient to fix the *terminus ad quem*. The prophecy must be placed before the Syro-Ephraimitic war, ca. 735. In this war Damascus and Israel were in alliance. It would be extremely unlikely for Isaiah to refer to Aram as an enemy, either in retrospect or prediction, during or after the conclusion of this alliance. With this date 5:26-29 agrees very well. This is more naturally placed before the

advance of Assyria under Tiglath-pileser in 734 than after it.<sup>1</sup> Finally the fact that in vs. 20 only Israel is mentioned as the enemy of Judah strongly favors a time before the Syro-Ephraimitic war, especially if the passage be construed as history, for in that war Damascus, not Israel, was the dominant factor. Since nothing in the prophecy points to a later period, and such data as there are positively favor the earliest period of Isaiah's ministry, the location of the prophecy before 735<sup>2</sup> may be regarded as sufficiently well established for the purposes of our argument.

1. Two discrepancies with history have been alleged and the conclusion is drawn that we are dealing with prophecy, not with history. These discrepancies are found in vs. 11 and vs. 20. The implications in these verses, it is said, do not agree with the situation implied in the Syro-Ephraimitic war. Consequently, it is inferred the statements are prediction (which need not be literally fulfilled) not history.<sup>3</sup> But if the prophecy is placed before the Syro-Ephraimitic war, it is surely a singular defect in logic to argue against its historical character because it does not agree with the later conditions in the time of the war. Accordingly the argument is reformulated.<sup>4</sup> If the prophecy is dated before 735 then the allusions in vss. 11 and 20 cannot be identified with any known historical facts in this earlier period and hence cannot be historical. But how many facts do we know of in the preceding period? Very few, and this too, though it was a time of seething political agitation. It seems very precarious to argue that these allusions must be predictions of an unknown future because they cannot be definitely identified

<sup>1</sup> But strictly speaking, all that can be claimed is that 5:26-29 agrees with the date demanded by 9:11, not that it confirms it as Duhm and Marti maintain. They urge that the mysterious way in which Assyria is introduced (it is not even mentioned by name) implies an early date before Assyria had as yet seriously threatened Judah. Since Assyria had mixed up in western politics since the days of Ashurnasirpal, this argument will hardly stand.

<sup>2</sup> So Duhm, Hackmann, Marti, Gray; also Dillmann and Cheyne. Giesebrecht locates it at the opening of the Syro-Ephraimitic war on account of vs. 20, but this is not so probable. The location of the prophecy after Tiglath-pileser's advance in 734 (Gesenius, Hitzig, Kuenen and more recently Wilke in his *Jesaja und Asshur*, 1905, pp. 24 f.) is based on three false premises: (a) that Resin in vs. 10 is original, from which it is concluded that Assyria's attack upon Damascus has already occurred and that in vs. 11 Aram and Philistia are warring in the armies of Assyria(!) against Israel; (b) that the fallen bricks in vs. 9 allude to 8:23 (cf. II Kings 15:29), and (c) that confirmatory of this second point is the position of 9:7-20 after 8:23-9:6.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Duhm and Marti, especially in vs. 20.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Gray.



with events in a little known past. But after all we *do* know some facts about the period preceding 735 and these, fortunately, are sufficient to enable us to reconstruct with a high degree of probability a historical situation into which the statements in vss. 11 and 20 may be fitted without serious difficulty. (a) We know that Jehu paid tribute to Shalmaneser, that is, followed a pro-Assyrian policy. (b) We may be fairly certain that his successors in the dynasty followed Jehu's policy, for they were in constant warfare with Damascus which was consistently anti-Assyrian. (c) We know that in its earlier history the Jehu dynasty was under the heel of Damascus, but with the weakening of Damascus through the conquests of Adad-nirari III Israel, under the energetic leadership of Jeroboam II, was able to turn the tables and for a time to forge ahead of its rival. (d) We know that at the death of Jeroboam II Israel was plunged into internal anarchy of the worst possible description<sup>1</sup> and that this disintegration synchronized with the advance of Tiglath-pileser into the West Land. (e) Finally, we know that by the time of Pekah Damascus had regained its controlling influence among the principalities of the West and Israel and Aram were now in alliance against Assyria. From these known facts several inferences may be drawn with considerable assurance. (a) The swiftly succeeding dynastic changes in Israel were probably not due simply to petty political ambitions of rivals but had a deeper significance. Politics was molded by the all-dominating Assyrian crisis. Party lines were drawn on the question of adopting a pro-Assyrian or anti-Assyrian policy. This inference is in agreement with what we know of the situation in all these Palestinian states during this and the subsequent period.<sup>2</sup> (b) We may next infer from the fact that the anti-Assyrian Pekah came to the throne through the murder of his predecessor Pekahiah, son of Menahem, that his predecessor followed a pro-Assyrian policy,<sup>3</sup> an inference abundantly established by Menahem's tribute to Tiglath-pileser. (c) We may now make the inference which bears directly upon the situation implied in vs. 11.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. II Kings, chap. 15, and Hosea *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> E.g., the case of Israel in the time of Pekah and Hosea and the case of Ekron in the time of Sennacherib.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the subsequent murder of Pekah himself by Hosea who was supported by Tiglath-pileser, II Kings 15:30 combined with Tiglath-pileser's inscriptions.

Just as the consistently anti-Assyrian Damascus joined with Israel when Israel was anti-Assyrian, so it would be hostile to Israel when Israel was pro-Assyrian,<sup>1</sup> that is, presumably in the time of Menahem. The probability of this hostility is increased by another consideration. When, after the death of Jeroboam II, Israel fell upon evil times, Damascus would not be slow to take advantage of her neighbor's weakness to recover lost ground. In the time of Menahem, therefore, we find just the conditions out of which vs. 11 may naturally be explained. What was true of the relationship between Israel and Damascus in this period is equally true of the relationship between Israel and the Philistine cities, for they were affected by precisely the same considerations of world-politics.<sup>2</sup>

But did the rival parties in Israel split along tribal lines? Can pro-Assyrian and anti-Assyrian be reasonably made to correspond with Ephraim and Manasseh (vs. 20)? (*d*) This inference has been drawn by Winckler.<sup>3</sup> It is interesting to notice that the anti-Assyrian Pekah was assisted by Gileadites (II Kings 15:25) who may not unreasonably be identified in their tribal relationships with Manasseh. But Manasseh which lay to the north and east of Ephraim would be most exposed to Damascene influence and therefore might very well be the hot-bed of anti-Assyrian intrigue, whereas Ephraim in whose capital the pro-Assyrian dynasty of Jehu had reigned for a hundred years might equally well have continued the tradition of Jehu's policy. Admittedly this combination is more speculative than anything thus far advanced. But it is not unreasonable, and such slight scraps of evidence as there are favor it.<sup>4</sup> There is lastly the allusion to the coalition of Manasseh and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the exactly analogous situation that later existed between the anti-Assyrian coalition of Damascus and Israel and the pro-Assyrian Judah under Ahaz. I Kings 7:1-9; II Kings, chap. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Vs. 11 may refer of course to the earlier hostility between Israel and Damascus and Israel and Philistia. While this possibility is not to be excluded I think it is more probable that events in the immediate past were especially in the mind of Isaiah.

<sup>3</sup> *KAT*, p. 263; cf. Giesebrecht, p. 19, for an earlier hint.

<sup>4</sup> Winckler's further conjectures are less secure. He points out that Shallum is called Ben Jabesh and Menahem Ben Gadi. Ben Jabesh and Ben Gadi are then taken, not as the names of the fathers of these men, but of the localities from which they came. Jabesh is identified with Jabesh Gilead and Gadi with Baal Gad, i.e., Baniyas on the north. Shallum the Gileadite, i.e., the Manassite, overthrows the pro-Assyrian dynasty of Jehu which was established in Ephraim. This combination answers very well. But Menahem, who comes from the north and is also presumably Damascene and anti-Assyrian, overthrows Shallum. This presents a difficulty. Winckler supposes that both Shallum

Ephraim against Judah. Here again we are confessedly in the dark. Construed historically, it must refer to an attack upon Judah by Israel before the Syro-Ephraimitic war, of which we know nothing. The genuineness of the clause is not above suspicion. After the rivalry between the two tribes, it is surprising to hear without a word of explanation that they have combined against Judah. The main thought of the passage is of the internal anarchy of Israel and the sudden introduction of an Israel united against Judah diverts the thought at the end of the strophe in a rather singular way. It is not altogether impossible, therefore, that the phrase is a gloss. As long ago as Eichhorn the clause was doubted.

On the other hand the rhythm of vs. 20*a*, though somewhat doubtful, rather favors the retention of the clause. If retained, it strongly supports the historical interpretation of the chapter, and for this reason. If the passage is predictive there is no adequate explanation of the allusion. The predictive theory *can* find an explanation for the allusion to the rivalry of Ephraim and Manasseh. Isaiah's intention, it may be supposed, is to emphasize the horror of the anarchy by representing the two tribes, which were united most closely by ties of blood, as tearing each other to pieces. But if we were only imagining a future situation the reference to their coalition against Judah would weaken the point which he wishes to enforce.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, if Isaiah were referring to the past, this reference to Judah can be explained as prompted by Isaiah's outraged feelings. The reminiscence of the actual historical fact is stronger than his feeling for the rhetorical propriety of the allusion in the present connection.

and Menahem attacked the pro-Assyrian dynasty of Jehu at the same time in the interest of anti-Assyrian policies, but that they were equally rivals of each other. When Menahem had displaced his rival and established himself in Samaria he adopted the pro-Assyrian policy of the dynasty that had so long reigned there, and paid his tribute to Tiglath-pileser. There is nothing intrinsically improbable in all this. In fact II Kings 15:19 rather implies that Menahem was originally anti-Assyrian and was at first coerced into paying tribute. Such sudden changes of policy can be abundantly illustrated, not only out of II Kings, chap. 15, but out of the history of the Philistine cities in this period as they are revealed in the inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser, Sargon and Sennacherib. But the interpretation which Winckler gives to *ben* is open to suspicion.

<sup>1</sup> Gray has pointed out the difficulty very well and because he holds to the predictive interpretation strongly inclines to regard the clause as a gloss by a later scribe who missed an allusion to the Syro-Ephraimitic war. The fact that Aram is not referred to would be due to the carelessness of the scribe, or rather to his lack of interest in the attitude of Aram.

If, now, we ask whether such a combination against Judah can be fitted into the historical situation which we have sought to reconstruct, it will be seen to be quite feasible. There were preliminary raids by Damascus and Israel apparently before the formal outbreak of the Syro-Ephraimitic war (II Kings 15:37) and even before any formal alliance between these two kingdoms Israel may well have composed its differences for a moment to make a raid into Judah, e.g., in the time of Menahem. A cause for it is not far to seek. At the fall of the Jehu dynasty Judah entered upon an era of considerable prosperity under Uzziah and Jotham. It would be very natural, therefore, for her to attempt to shake off her vassalage to Israel which she had to endure during the larger part of her history. It would be equally natural for Menahem who seems to have been a man of considerable force to resist this effort at freedom. It must be frankly admitted that if construed as history, vss. 11 and 20 refer to facts of which we have no independent record. But it is claimed that the facts implied in these verses are in entire harmony with what is definitely known or may be reasonably inferred as to the situation prior to 735. Therefore, instead of construing vss. 11 and 20 as predictions against all the critical and exegetical indications of the context, it would seem to be the part of wisdom thankfully to accept the interesting and instructive sidelights which these verses, construed as history, throw upon a dark but intensely interesting period in Israel's history.

To offset the difficulties which attach to the statements in vss. 11 and 20, there may be urged the remarkable coincidence between the description of the internal anarchy in Israel at vss. 17-19 and the state of affairs described in II Kings, chap. 15. and Hosea. Even Gray is impressed by this. He says: "In vss. 16-20a Isaiah is certainly describing, whether historically or (as is more probable) prophetically, a state of affairs similar to what he had actually witnessed in the Northern Kingdom." In other words, if this is prophecy the peculiar form of it is explained out of Isaiah's historical experiences. This is all very well and psychologically correct, but it is certainly no argument for the prophetic interpretation to say that the passage is like history!<sup>1</sup> Further it is interesting to notice that vss. 17-19

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Duhm's statement at vs. 9. We have here clearly the same situation which Hosea describes at 7:8 f. Duhm, by the way, urges vs. 9 against the retrospective

are related to vs. 20 in the same way apparently that 1:6 is related to 1:7 f. Vs. 20 thus becomes the interpretation of vss. 17-19. Vs. 20 is accordingly not purely imaginative but historical.

2. But it is contended that the *vagueness* of the allusions in 9:7-20, and not simply the discrepancies with historical facts, makes against the interpretation of the passage as a retrospect. Why not definite, concrete allusions? Now the only allusions beyond those already discussed are found in the badly corrupted strophe, vss. 12-16. Two facts are mentioned here: (a) the decimation of the people in one day (vs. 13), and (b) the fate of the fatherless and the widows (vs. 16). The latter may be regarded as an allusion, admittedly generalized in form, to the terrible sufferings which had been experienced only too often in the history of Israel. Cf. Amos 1:13; II Kings 8:12, and in the immediate past, II Kings 15:16 and Hos. 10:14. The exact nature of the decimation in vs. 13 it is impossible to define. Is it due to a plague or earthquake? We cannot say. Commentators are divided in their answers. Too much importance must not be attached to the "one day." This phrase is certainly rhetorical, not historical. It emphasizes the surprise of the calamity.<sup>1</sup> There is nothing concrete in this stanza and the prophecy as a whole shares in only a slightly less degree in the quality of vagueness found in vss. 12-16. Further, this indefiniteness must be associated with another peculiar fact, namely the absence of any clear chronological sequence in vss. 7-20.<sup>2</sup> Thus not only the allusions are vague and, as it were, generalized, but the chronology is vague, though the refrain might lead one to expect a clearly marked historical progress. But can this peculiarity of the prophecy which undoubtedly exists, be fairly urged against its interpretation as retrospect? I doubt it. Isaiah intentionally seeks to avoid or, rather, being a great artist, he instinctly avoids just the aesthetic mistakes which Duhm would ascribe to the passage, construed historically. It is not a ballad dealing with concrete events. It is not a *Schulaufsatz*. It is a

theory. It is said to prove that the misfortunes subsequently mentioned have not yet occurred. Duhm's argument seems to be based on the still existing pride of Ephraim, but he ignores the fallen bricks.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. I Kings 20:29; II Chron. 28:6; Isa. 10:17, and especially for the idea of surprise, Isa. 47:9; 66:8.

<sup>2</sup> Giesebrecht's attempt (pp. 18 ff.) to find such a sequence must be regarded as unsuccessful.

*poetical* retrospect.<sup>1</sup> He is looking back upon an actual past but he surrounds it with an imaginative mystery just as he surrounds the Assyrians in 5:26-29 with the same veil of mystery though they were at the time well known. The analogy between our prophecy and Amos 4:6-12 is here complete. Yet the majority of scholars adopt the historical interpretation of the Amos prophecy without hesitation. It remained for Gressmann to construe Amos also as prediction because of its similar vagueness and generalization. This is done in connection with his so-called *Plagen-Theorie*,<sup>2</sup> and here it may be found that something besides mere aesthetic feeling led Isaiah to adopt the vague description of the past which is found to characterize our prophecy. According to Gressmann these mysterious descriptions of the unfolding drama of the future, in which ruin succeeds ruin in pitiless sequence follow a system or *Schema* derived from a conjectured pre-prophetic eschatology. The descriptions are therefore conventional in character, and hence their peculiar vagueness is accounted for. But, granted for the sake of the argument the existence of such a *Plagen-Theorie*, and there is something to be said in its favor,<sup>3</sup> does it prove that the Isaiah prophecy or the Amos prophecy is to be construed as a forecast? By no means. Gressmann himself would account for the peculiar form in which the narrative of the Miracles at the Exodus is cast by the supposition that it is expressed in terms of his eschatological *Plagen-Theorie*. That is to say, he holds that the literary conventions which properly belong to an eschatological series of punishments can also be utilized in descriptions of the past. Grammar, exegesis, and criticism must therefore determine in each case whether a conventionalized description applies to the future or to the past. The fact that such conventionalized description is employed cannot of itself prove a future reference. Certainly it cannot be used to overthrow results arrived at through a strictly exegetical procedure. Granted that grammatically and exegetically 9:7-20 naturally refers to the past, the vagueness of the allusions cannot be relied upon to disprove this natural conclusion. On the

<sup>1</sup> The possibility of such an interpretation is suggested by Gray, but only to be rejected.

<sup>2</sup> *Ursprung d. israelitisch-jüdischen Eschatologie*, pp. 168-73.

<sup>3</sup> The remarkable passage cited by Gray from Jastrow, *Bab. Assyr. Relig.*, p. 532, may be studied in this connection.

other hand, if Isaiah wished to show that the history of the Northern Kingdom as a whole is to be interpreted as a great eschatological drama, it would be most natural for him to employ the literary convention of the assumed eschatological literature or tradition in describing the actual past, for thus he would be able to connect the past sin and punishment organically with the final future doom.

With this consideration our argument is completed. The conclusions would seem to be inevitable: 5:26-29 is the conclusion to the prophecy against Ephraim which begins with 9:7. Further it should be attached immediately to 9:7-20 or to a strophe now lost but similar in import to the first three strophes. Again, 10:1-4a was no part of the original prophecy but has taken the place of 5:26-29 or of a lost strophe,<sup>1</sup> when these verses became detached through an

<sup>1</sup> Since our judgment upon 5:25 depends upon our solution of the other critical problems of the prophecy and does not influence our solution to any appreciable degree, I have not thought it wise to complicate the argument with a discussion of this verse. But at this point it is well briefly to sum up what is to be said concerning it. The refrain in the last clauses of course must have come into its present position along with vss. 26-29 when the latter passage was torn away from its original connection. Fortunately for us vss. 26-29 dragged the refrain along with it. But is the rest of the verse a part of a strophe to which this refrain was a conclusion (so Dill, Duhm), or is it editorial (Giesebrecht, Marti, Gray)?

The main objections to the genuineness of the verse are two: (1) It is urged (especially by Giesebrecht) that the construction points to past time and that therefore the verse is presumably historical. Accordingly we should expect definite, concrete allusions. But as a matter of fact the allusions are extremely vague. We cannot certainly say whether the reference is to an earthquake (Duhm) or to a pestilence (Marti). But we have seen that this argument which has been utilized against the historical interpretation of 9:7-29 is not necessarily valid. The verse is no vaguer than 9:13 and it is not unreasonable to suppose that if the entire stanza had been preserved the exact meaning of the allusion would have been clearer. (2) It is maintained that the ideas in the verse are characteristic of the prophetic descriptions of theophanies in the *future*. Cf. for earthquake, Mic. 1:3, 4; Nah. 1:5; Amos 8:8 f.; 9:5; Joel 4:16; Ezek. 14:9, 13; Isa. 29:6; 13:13-16. Cf. for pestilence, Zeph. 1:17; Jer. 9:21; Hab. 3:5-20. For unburied corpses cf. Jer. 16:4; 25:33. Vs. 25 *a* and *b* are supposed to have been developed out of the refrain (note "anger" and "hand" in both) by utilizing these common prophetic ideas. Incidentally the defective rhythm may also be urged against the genuineness of the verse. This last argument is of little weight at this point, for the verse probably suffered at the time when the strophe in which it stood was disintegrated. The same answer may be made to the second argument which has been already made in connection with the interpretation of 9:7-20. We have seen that some of the peculiarities of the prophecy can be explained by the supposition that the descriptions of the past have been somewhat conventionalized. Isaiah was familiar with these conventions of the prophetic style as is clearly seen in chap. 2. There we find the earthquake almost certainly used as a convention. It is true that chap. 2 refers to the future. But we have seen how in this particular prophecy which culminates in the final doom, it was very natural to employ the same prophetic conventions, to some extent at least, of the past also. There is no more indefiniteness here, especially when the fragmentary character of the verse is remembered, than in Amos 4:6-12 where, by the way, a pestilence and other natural calamities are also alluded to. Hence the contents of the verse do not warrant its rejection. On the other hand, two considerations make in favor of its acceptance as a part of a

accident whose origin it is no longer possible to determine. The historical tenses in 9:7-20 are true historical tenses, not prophetic perfects or their equivalents. Vss. 11 and 20 may therefore properly be utilized to supplement our meager knowledge of the period immediately preceding 735. In the course of the argument some by-products of exegesis and criticism have, it is hoped, been discovered which have hitherto escaped attention.

#### OBERLIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

lost strophe. (1) Negatively it is difficult to explain the purpose of the verse if it is editorial. It can hardly be a connecting link with what precedes for it does not connect. Giesebrecht holds that it is just an attempt to supply a background for the refrain that was found here. Marti suggests that it was an attempt to eschatologize what follows. Vs. 25 alludes to the actual destruction of Jerusalem which was past at the time this verse was added. The editor, under the domination of the Gog and Magog theory of history, interpreted vss. 26-29 of the last great world-war against Jerusalem and therefore supplied what was considered to be the necessary preliminary to this, namely, the destruction of Jerusalem in the Babylonian exile. But it seems hardly possible to find all this in the simple vs. 25. Thus the purpose of the verse, regarded as the contribution of an editor, is difficult to explain. (2) The historical cast of the verse, on the other hand, makes strongly in favor of the view that it originally belonged to 9:7-20. An editor would scarcely have adopted this construction unless he wished to express what Marti maintains he expressed. But even an editor ought to have been able to express such a thought more unambiguously than has been done. It is far simpler to explain the historical construction as due to the one-time original connection of vs. 25 with 9:7-20. But if it was a part of that poem the only natural place for the strophe in which it once stood is where 10:1-4a now stands. There again we meet with the refrain in vs. 4b, and it does seem as if 10:1-4a was the attempt to make good the loss of a strophe which stood before the refrain in vs. 4b that was somehow preserved in its present original position. In other words, what I have doubted with regard to 5:25, namely that it is filling which serves as background for the fragmentary refrain, I hold to be true for 10:1-4a. Vs. 25 may be a fragment of the missing strophe whose loss 10:1-4a seeks to make good. After the political calamities in 9:7-20 it would not have been at all unlikely for Isaiah to construct a strophe along the lines of Amos 4:6-12 in which natural calamities are the main features. The suggestion here given will most readily account for the fact, which is otherwise almost unaccountable, that 10:1-4 should have been added to 9:7-20. Hackmann's query is pertinent: Unless it was added to make good the loss of a strophe of which 10:4b is a fragment, why should it have been added at all? Yet if the verse is accepted its original phrasing must have been modified. Not only is its rhythm defective, but it is doubtful if Isaiah ever spoke of Jahweh as Israel's God (יהוה).